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Veliz: B period

Chapter 8 essay

GEORGE WASHINGTON, the first president of the United States of America and the greatest leader of the America. The 57 year-old president elect was moving throughout the country solving problems. After the constitutional convention, Washington was hoping for a nice retirement, but his citizens elected him as the president and Washington took the oath of office under the federal constitution on April 30, 1789. John Adams was the vice president. Many people thought that the president would become a dictator but they all trusted Washington. They knew that this leadership had brought them victory in the Revolutionary war. Washington established precedents for the next presidents to follow. One important precedent is the way people should address him and decided that citizens should call him “Mr. President”. Washington and congress had good plans for a new government. The constitution gave the congress the power to make executive departments. The problem was that it did not state whether the heads would report to the president or to congress.

Initially, during 1789, congress established three different types of departments in the executive branch. The state department would handle things with other nations, the treasury department would take care of financial problems, and the war department would defend the nation. Also created was attorney general to deal with the government’s legal affairs and the postmaster to control the postal service. Washington picked important people that he thought could help lead- Thomas Jefferson as secretary of state, Alexander Hamilton as secretary of treasury, and Henry Knox as secretary of war. He appointed Edmund Randolph as attorney general. Washington and these members became known as the cabinet. A vote for how much power the president should have over the congress was a tie but was broke by the VP on voting to allow the president to get rid of cabinet officers without the senate’s approval.

Furthermore, Washington rarely proposed laws, and almost always passed bills approved by congress. There was a big problem that forced the nation to go into national debt. This was a time for Alexander Hamilton to come in and fix the problem. Hamilton’s plan did not help the government but ruined it which led to the Whiskey Rebellion. Washington and his helpers decided to stop the challenge and they succeeded. For this Washington paid close attention to citizens who opposed the government’s decisions. If people wanted to change a law they had to do it peacefully through the constitution or they would take action with force. A struggle over the west arose between the Americans and the Native Americans. The Native Americans turned to Britain and Spain to help them. Fighting broke out and Washington sent an army under General St. Clair to restore order in the northwest. The Natives beat them badly which forced the Americans to act again. Washington sent another army headed by Anthony Dewayne and they defeated over 1.00 Native Americans at the battle of fallen timbers. The Americans crushed them in which the Natives signed the treaty of Greenville that said that the Native Americans agreed to surrender most of the land in present day Ohio.

Additionally, shortly after Washington was inaugurated in 1789, the French revolution began. Americans were starting to divide among different countries between the France and Britain battle. Washington hoped that the people of the U.S. could remain neutral. On April 22 Washington created the proclamation of neutrality. It prohibited American citizens from fighting in the war and barred French and British war ships from American ports. President Washington decided to make one last effort to come to a peaceful answer with Britain. He sent John Jay, chief of justice to Britain to figure something out. Jay issued a treaty the dealt with the British leaving America, having them pay for damaged ships, and to allow American trade with the British in the Caribbean. Some Americans protested that it did not take care of impressments and didn’t mention British problems with American trade. Washington did find error with the treaty and noticed it would end a crisis with Great Britain. Washington sent the treaty to the senate which barely passed it.

In conclusion, September 1796 was when Washington declared he would leave after his second term and not serve a third. 64 years old was his age when he retired and looked forward to Mount Vernon. He warned the nation of political parties and the involvement of foreign affairs. Washington influenced the nation and his presidency was known for its dignity and elegance. Later the nation got out of control and political parties arose between Jefferson and Hamilton.